



# — DRIFTING LAURENT

**acid**  
CANNES  
2025

A Film by Mattéo Eustachon, Léo Couture & Anton Balekdjian

**PRESSKIT**





# — DRIFTING LAURENT

110 MIN

FRANCE

2025

1.85

DOLBY 5.1

FRENCH

## SCREENINGS IN CANNES

FRI. MAY 16<sup>th</sup>, 2:00 PM @ PALAIS C (Market)  
FRI. MAY 16<sup>th</sup>, 8:00 PM @ ARCADES 1  
(World Premiere)  
FRI. MAY 16<sup>th</sup>, 8:30 PM @ ARCADES 2 (Official)  
SAT. MAY 17<sup>th</sup>, 4:15 PM @ LERINS 3 (Market)

## INTERNATIONAL SALES

Best Friend Forever  
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Martin Gondre – [martin@bffsales.eu](mailto:martin@bffsales.eu)  
Charles Bin – [charles@bffsales.eu](mailto:charles@bffsales.eu)  
Marc Nauleau (festivals) – [marc@bffsales.eu](mailto:marc@bffsales.eu)

## PR

Makna presse

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# — SYNOPSIS

Laurent, 29 years old, is looking for meaning in his life. He ends up in a deserted ski resort in the off-season and quickly blends into the surprising lives of its few locals. When the tourists arrive with winter, Laurent can't leave anymore...





# A CONVERSATION WITH MATTÉO EUSTACHON, LÉO COUTURE & ANTON BALEKDJIAN



The subtitle of your first film, *Dying in Ibiza*, was “a film over three summers.” With *Drifting Laurent*, you’ve chosen a single location—a mountain setting—during the off-season.

**LC** Without trying to contradict systematically, it reflects the spirit of our trio. We love thinking against what came before.

**ME** We like our settings to embody the deep feelings we’re exploring. The mountains, the winter matched the theme of solitude, whereas *Dying in Ibiza* was a sun-drenched film about encounters.

**AB** Then we were pulled back toward what we love to tell—stories of encounters, and the way love, in all its forms, takes root between people. After exploring the threshold of adulthood in *Dying in Ibiza*, *Drifting Laurent* looks at what it means to feel like life is already behind you—barely into your thirties. And in the end, even though we were convinced we were doing the opposite of what we’d done before... we almost ended up making the same thing!

*Drifting Laurent* stretches from a documentary-style naturalism, drawn from the real places where you filmed, and the poetic register of a magical fable. How did you go about weaving these two worlds together?

**ME** I’m convinced that life holds magic, and that telling a story means drawing from a very tangible reality while also paying tribute to chance—and to the spiritual. Everything that appears in the film was something someone once told us.

**AB** We like filming everyday life and intimacy as if they were adventures. We wrote a storyline in which a solitary character goes through a series of encounters in a very empty place. The archetypes were already there: a photographer

who shoots curves, a farmer looking for his goat, an herbalist living alone with her son... We’d heard about a man who had spent a year alone in a ski resort. So we went there on a location scout. We spent time wandering, knocking on doors. Very quickly, we felt that what we were doing made sense—that people wanted to talk to us.

For several months we worked going back and forth between writing phases and real-life encounters that gradually wove themselves into the original fable, until it all became one. We kept a journal of everything that happened to us. Later, we kept drawing from it to recover details and enrich the characters.

Writing helped us bring into the same valley all these stories that, in their own way, spoke of contemporary solitude and of how people try to rebuild a sense of community in a violent world. For those who live in it, the valley is both a refuge and a form of isolation. That way of relating to the world resonated with us—probably because it echoed something within ourselves.

**All the characters are solitary, but when Laurent takes an interest in them, it’s as if he opens a tap—their words suddenly come pouring out.**

**AB** It almost became a running joke in the script—to ask ourselves at what point each character would dive into a tunnel of monologue.

**LC** Everyone gets their moment. Laurent is the one who brings it out, but we also experienced this during scouting. People sometimes warned us not to approach certain locals—that they would surely slam the door in our faces. And, of course, those were the ones we ended up talking with for hours.



**Laurent arrives like a stranger in this closed-off world.**

**AB** While writing and asking ourselves who Laurent really was, we thought of people we’ve known who one day simply vanished—or who, without actually leaving, suddenly seemed elsewhere, no longer fully present to themselves. We discovered Baptiste Perusat in Brieuc Schieb’s mid-length film *Koban Louzoù*. We wrote with him in mind. Not because we were sure he would play the part, but imagining the character in his body gave us a direction. He was the very first person we saw in casting, and then we met with around thirty other actors.

**LC** We circled around this actor for quite a while before realizing he was the one we’d been looking for. He brought something to Laurent that was far less physically tense than what had been written in the script. There’s something more delicate about him, more suspended.

**AB** His grace and his humor come from a contradiction between his quiet presence and his striking expressiveness.

**How did you approach blending non-professional actors with performers from such different backgrounds?**

**ME** Our rule was that non-professional actors had to be locals from the area where we were filming. We scouted locations and potential cast members at the same time. The principle was simple: characters from the valley would be played by people from the region, while outsiders—those just passing through or taking refuge there—would be played by professional actors we’d brought with us.

**AB** We thought of Béatrice Dalle as soon as the character of this reclusive woman with a turbulent past began to take shape. We had often come across that kind of woman—between fifty and sixty, living in deep isolation, with a life full of past adventures. In Béatrice,

we sensed a gentleness that hadn’t really been tapped into, and that we wanted to guide her toward.

We’d known Suzanne de Baecque for a while—she acted in several short films made at La Cinéfabrique, where we studied. We loved how her energy stood in stark contrast to Laurent’s, while still carrying a kind of lostness that ultimately echoed that of her brother.

**LC** We loved Djanis Bouzyani in *Tu mérites un amour* by Hafsia Herzi. Beneath the quick wit and sharp one-liners that act like a spiky shield, you can feel deep empathy.

**AB** We never approach actors in terms of their technique. We choose professionals almost the same way we choose non-professionals.

**LC** Thomas Daloz approached the role of Santiago as a composition, inspired by a real YouTuber—very far from the part he played in Blaise Harrison’s *Particles*. But at the same time, we quickly saw that he carried within him a way of relating to the world that closely mirrored the character’s.

We met dozens of elderly women before realizing that Monique Crespín, whom we’d known since the very beginning of our location scouting, was meant to play Lola. Sometimes, it takes a whole process just to recognize what’s right in front of you

**AB** The casting process reminded us of the final line from Bresson’s *Pickpocket*: “What a strange path to get to you.” It’s the same with Laurent. He’s fixated on the idea that going to Marseille with Farès is the solution. But it takes the whole film for him to realize that the right people were there from the very first scene.

We liked the idea of an unemployed character whose only “work” is clinging to others, searching for love. That ties into a political idea we care about in cinema: how characters who are all just barely getting by, each on the margins in their own way, end up forming a kind of community within the film.

**Laurent experiences desire first for a young man, then for an older woman. You film these two intimate encounters in very different ways—the first one with a sense of awkwardness, even burlesque and the second through sound, focusing on Laurent’s breathing.**

**AB** Sex remains off-screen. Both scenes are quite restrained and focus instead on two desires—whether or not they align. Farès and Laurent have a mistaken idea of what the other wants, whereas with Sophia, in a way that’s mysterious and almost magical, everything happens quickly and intensely, even though they have nothing in common.

**ME** It’s like a new first time for both of them. Laurent is a body that no longer knows how to move—and is set back in motion. He needed to be touched; that’s what reconnects him to life, and to others. He even says it himself: his dream is to love and be loved. At first, we thought Laurent’s arc would simply be about getting

better. But in the end, he’s just as lost—he’s only decided to turn his problem into a way of getting by.

**The whistling in the soundtrack conjures the breath returning to Laurent’s body—but it also echoes the spirit of a western.**

**ME** While writing, we had western imagery in mind—the guy who shows up in a ghost town, carrying all his bags on his back. Like Corbucci’s *Django*, dragging his coffin behind him. Léo, who composed the music, instinctively felt it should be written for cello. He even bought one—without ever having played before!

**LC** The great thing about the cello is that you’re always close to a wrong note—you can feel the melody might tumble at any moment. It fits well with these characters, who all carry a kind of awkwardness, and end up limping along together. And then there’s the fragility and instability of the whistling, layered on top of that.





**AB** When thinking about Laurent's character, we tried to imagine what connected him to his sister—what might be a kind of lost paradise for both of them. *Desaparecido* by Manu Chao evoked, for the three of us, a certain childhood nostalgia, memories of car rides in the early 2000s... When we read the lyrics, the idea of reuniting with loved ones resonated with what Laurent is experiencing at that point in the film.

**What kind of freedom does working with a small crew give you?**

**ME** That place had its own rhythm—one that wasn't shaped by a film shoot, that we could fully impose on ourselves. The film is about arriving somewhere where no one knows you. We're always very careful not to overwhelm the places we step into.

**AB** We shot for 33 days, which meant working with a small crew—between 6 and 18 people—and with very limited technical resources.

**LC** To preserve the same sense of freedom we had on *Dying in Ibiza*, we needed time beforehand—to make space for moments of hesitation, confusion, uncertainty. Time to wander, to feel the place, to walk around... ultimately to do what Laurent does in the first shot: land there almost by accident, and then begin to drift and swirl around the valley's inhabitants.



# BIOGRAPHY MATTÉO EUSTACHON, LÉO COUTURE & ANTON BALEKDJIAN

Anton Balekdjian, Léo Couture and Mattéo Eustachon met while studying at the Ciné-fabrique. After graduating in 2020 from the script, sound and image departments respectively, they began working together on a film. They made *Dying in Ibiza* (a film in three summers), a collection of three medium-length films shot over three years, released in cinemas in 2022. Now they've made a new film together *Drifting Laurent* premiering in Cannes ACID.



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# FILMOGRAPHY

## MATTÉO EUSTACHON, LÉO COUTURE & ANTON BALEKDJIAN

2022 *Dying in Ibiza (A Film in Three Summers)* – FID Marseille



# CAST

Laurent	Baptiste Perusat
Sophia	Béatrice Dalle
Santiago	Thomas Daloz
Farès	Djanis Bouzyani
Coline	Suzanne De Baecque
Lola	Monique Crespín
Lizzy	Ira Verbitskaya

# CREW

Directors	Mattéo Eustachon, Léo Couture & Anton Balekdjian
Screenplay	Mattéo Eustachon, Léo Couture & Anton Balekdjian
Director of Photography	Mattéo Eustachon
1 <sup>st</sup> Assistant Directors	Carla Hennequart
Casting	Judith Fraggi, Stéphane Batut
Costume Design	Yvett Rotscheid
Production Manager	Salomé Fleischmann
Location Manager	Louise Lebrat
Editing	François Quiqueré
Sound Engineer	Léo Couture
Sound Composer	Léo Couture
Original Music	Léo Couture
Colorist	Gadiel Bendelac
Post-production	Bérangère Crespi
Production	Mabel Films
Producers	Joséphine Mourlaque, Antoine Salomé
Co Producers	Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes Cinéma
Country	France
French Distributor	Arizona Distribution
International Sales	Best Friend Forever





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